

**REMARKS**

Claims 2, 3, and 6-15 are now pending in the application. No claim has been allowed.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention because there is no antecedent basis for "the fastener". Examiner is correct in assuming that Applicant intended claim 3 to depend from claim 2, and not claim 10. Claim 3 has been amended accordingly.

Claims 2-3, 6-8, 10-12, and 14-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tirrell et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,828,546) in view of Beaman et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,980,275).

The present invention relates to enclosures for electronic equipment and, more specifically, to a front panel rotatably connected to a circuit sled module and having grounding tabs such that the front panel serves as both an extraction lever and an electrically continuous surface.

Typically, a mounting tray may contain an array of circuit sled modules for electronic components such as hard disk drives (HDDs). A circuit sled module has a chassis, the HDD, a circuit board, and a front panel. The HDD is mounted to the chassis. One end of such a circuit sled module generally contains electrical signal connectors which mate with corresponding connectors mounted at the end of the tray. Because individual modules can be added and removed from the tray, the modules need surfaces to provide proper grounding, particularly where the front panel of the modules also serve as a rotatable extraction lever and may not have any direct electrical contact with the chassis tray.

Applicant solves this problem by providing grounding tabs on the front panel. As explained in the specification, the grounding tabs, preferably located on both sidewalls of the front panel, are used for electrically grounding a given front panel to the adjacent front panels of other circuit sled modules when they are inserted into the tray. As a panel engages or disengages a circuit sled module, the attached grounding tabs also automatically engage or disengage contact with another grounding tab. Thus, the front panels not only serve as extraction levers but also

provide an electrically continuous surface and therefore an electromagnetically enclosed structure.

Applicant agrees with the Examiner that Tirrell et al. disclose a panel rotatably connected to a circuit sled module and having at least one hook for engaging a catch on a tray when the panel is rotated into the closed position.

Beaman et al. disclose a bracket for mounting a printed circuit card into the frame of a personal computer or work station. As shown in Fig. 3 of Beaman et al. the bracket 10 provides a plurality of contact pads 34 disposed along the walls of the bracket 10 to engage a mating channel surface 84 within the computer frame. As explained in Beaman et al., "The engagement of the contact pads 34 with the mating channel 82 grounds the region of bracket 10 immediately surrounding the apertures 30 and the fingers 32 [shown in Fig. 1] and provides an effective barrier to the emission of EMR or EMI." (col. 3, lines 54-58). In this way, the bracket 10 provides "electromagnetic shielding and electrical grounding surrounding said interface opening" (col. 5, lines 32-34).

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) there must be some suggestion or motivation in prior art references to combine the teachings of such prior art references. MPEP§ 2143. Nothing disclosed in Beaman et al. suggests combining Beaman et al. with Tirrell et al. to produce Applicant's invention. Beaman et al. address the problem of providing electromagnetic shielding and electrical grounding surrounding an interface opening. Thus, Beaman et al. suggest that if it were combined with Tirrell et al., electromagnetic shielding and electrical grounding would be provided via brackets at a plurality of interface openings 70 disposed along a backplane 80 shown in Fig. 1a of Tirrell et al.

Beaman et al. also do not suggest its combination with Tirrell et al. to electrically connect a plurality of front panels to provide a flat electrically continuous front panel surface.

Furthermore, neither Beaman et al. nor Tirrell et al. teach or suggest their combination to attach grounding tabs to a rotatable panel. Beaman et al. disclose a bracket rigidly attached to both a computer frame and a mezzanine card (see Fig. 3). The placement of contact pads on the fixed bracket of Beaman et al. thus does not suggest the placement of contact pads on the rotatable ejector or panel of Tirrell et al.

Since neither of the cited references teach or suggest their combination to produce Applicant's invention as set forth in claim 10 ("a panel ... rotatably connected to the circuit sled module ... comprises electrically conductive grounding tabs for electrically connecting the panel to an adjacent panel to provide a flat electrically continuous front panel surface"), claim 10 should be allowed. Independent claims 12-15 include similar limitations and should be allowed for at least the same reasons.

Since claims 2-3, 7-9, and 11 depend from claim 10, they should also be allowed for at least the same reasons.

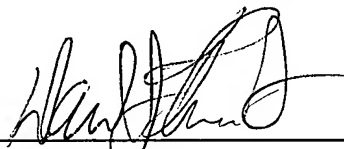
Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are allowable over the prior art of record.

### CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.

By 

David J. Thibedeau, Jr.  
Registration No. 31,671  
Telephone: (978) 341-0036  
Facsimile: (978) 341-0136

Concord, MA 01742-9133

Dated: 11/10/04